

be a Kansan. My chest puffed up, full of pride. It just made me so very proud to be there with the Kansans to see this is what a Congressman, a Senator, is supposed to look like.

For months, as we led up to that event, his family and friends watched as he struggled to regain strength after several more health setbacks. I remember the family didn't think he would be able to attend, but much like the wounded Bob Dole in the forties, he was able to accept that award personally. He miraculously recovered, like he had so many times before.

At that marvelous ceremony where he got to hear the gratitude of a nation, the song "You'll Never Walk Alone" was played. I was close enough that I could see him mouth the words to the President: "This is my favorite song." And I was close enough that I could hear his voice—a voice we were all familiar with—sing along, softly sing these lyrics:

When you walk through a storm
Hold your head up high and don't be afraid of the dark
At the end of the storm there's a golden sky
and the sweet silver song of a lark
Walk on through the wind
Walk on through the rain
Though your dreams be tossed and blown
Walk on
Walk on with hope in your heart and you'll
never walk alone
You'll never walk alone.

For so many of us—Kansans, veterans, the poor and hungry around the world, farmers, the disability community, and more—we never walk alone. We thank you, Senator Dole, for walking beside us, always giving us hope. We love you, we miss you, and we thank you.

God bless America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL

UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RELATING TO "COVID-19 VACCINATION AND TESTING; EMERGENCY TEMPORARY STANDARD"

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I move to proceed to S.J. Res. 29.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 29) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing; Emergency Temporary Standard".

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the provisions of 5, United States Code 802, there will now be up to 10 hours of debate, equally divided.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator CASSIDY be allowed to complete his remarks before the next scheduled vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. RUBIO. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, we have a crisis here in the United States, which we cannot keep ignoring. After the pandemic hit, we took our eyes off the issue of opioid and other drug overdoses.

We have made tremendous progress over the previous 4 years. The Trump Administration made it a priority. Congress has made it a priority. We have funded multiple programs, and we have seen that the incidence rate of drug overdose was decreasing and for opioids in particular.

But with the lockdown and the personal stress this led to, we have seen an uptick once more in these opioid deaths. From April 2020 to April 2021, we saw over 100,000 overdoses linked to opioids and other overdoses beyond that, and fentanyl causing 64 percent of them.

Now, we talk about statistics, but we sometimes, in those statistics, lose the human dimension. I remember a 911 call I once heard, and in it there was a frantic woman calling because her husband was overdosed: Please come help. And that is tragic, but you almost become used to it. What brought tears to your eyes was that in the background you heard the baby crying.

Now, it is easy to imagine, one, what that child's life is now—the child of an addict—but it is also easy to imagine what the child's future is with a single parent having to deal with the death of a father and all that means.

It is not just the opioid death. It is the opioid family that has to bear the burden of the loss: first, to addiction and then, secondly, to death.

Now, there is a unique role here for the country of China. We don't know that it is the Chinese Government, but we certainly know it is the country of China.

Fentanyl is a synthetic poison that is taking the lives of so many of these who die from opioid addiction—certainly true in my State, Louisiana. The country of China's role in this opioid crisis is by providing the chemicals to the Mexican and South American cartels, which take those raw chemicals and make them into the

fentanyl that then comes into our country. And this is what is causing the addiction.

Now, by the way, opioid addiction is incredibly powerful. In another story from when I was a practicing physician, in the emergency room, at 3 in the morning, where the grandmother was there with the addict daughter, and the child—grandchild of the grandmother, child of the addict—was crying because the grandmother was taking the child away from his mother. The mother didn't care. And it struck me that if something is so powerful to disrupt the relationship between a mother and her child, the power of that cannot be ignored.

So when we look at these drugs that people are addicted to, we have to understand the hold they have upon their physiology, their emotional life, their psychology—in a sum, their whole life.

So what can we do? We can't just give up. We have to make a pushback for the sake of those who are in addiction and the family members that they have. So we need to modernize our customs process. I have a Customs Modernization Act, which will crack down on the illicit trade, if you will, the way that the cartels are financing and moving drugs across the border. If we can address that, we can address the supply, and we can decrease the number of people who have access to these drugs.

Today, I introduce the HALT Fentanyl Act to make permanent the temporary schedule I of fentanyl analogs. What this means is that in an effort to evade our laws, the cartels will make some little analog—just a little bit different from regular fentanyl, which is regulated—but, nonetheless, has the addictive potential and the ability to kill of regular fentanyl. And this will allow us to combat the criminals and to hold the companies in China responsible.

The next thing we have to do is start by closing down our southern border. It is not just the migrants who are coming across but tens of thousands of pounds of drugs. We are now seizing more fentanyl and meth than we ever have before. Even the DEA Administrator, Anne Milgram, agrees that drugs flowing across the border are fueling the opioid crisis.

She said this on national TV: "The real problem are the criminal drug networks in Mexico." She says fentanyl and meth are being "mass produced in Mexico," sourcing chemicals mostly coming from China, and they are "driving the overdose deaths".

We have a responsibility to our fellow Americans. Perhaps I feel it more acutely as a physician who has been with those patients and their families who are fighting addiction, but we should all feel the pain of that child crying as her mother was calling for 911 to come assist the father who had stopped breathing from an overdose. So let us redouble our efforts and hope others will join on both the Customs Modernization Act and the HALT